

IN THE CLAIMS:

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1. (currently amended) A method for storage and retrieval of programs and data within a PLC system, the PLC system including a plurality of modules including a memory host module including a CPU and memory, at least one option module including a CPU and memory, a backplane interconnecting the memory host module and the option module, said method comprising the steps of:

storing in the memory of the memory host module an operating program and data for the option module; and

retrieving a first portion of the operating program and data from the memory of the memory host module, wherein the first portion corresponds to the option module;

retaining, by the memory host module, a remaining portion of the operating program and data; and

transmitting the first portion of the operating program and data to the option module.

2. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 1 further comprising the step of transferring the first portion of the operating program and data for the option module from the memory of the memory host module to the option module memory via the backplane.

3. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 1 further comprising the step of transferring the first portion of the operating program and data for the option module from the memory of the option module to the memory host module via the backplane.

4. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 1 wherein the memory host module is further configured with an external device interface, said method further comprising the step of transferring the first portion of the operating program and data for the option module from an external device, through the memory host module, to the memory of the option module via the backplane.

5. (original) A method according to Claim 1 wherein the memory host module is further configured with an external device interface, said method further comprising the step

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of transferring the operating program and data for the option module from an external device to the memory of the memory host module via the external device interface.

6. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 1 wherein the memory host module further configured with an interface to an external device, said method further comprising the step of transferring the first portion of the operating program and data for the option module from the option module through the memory host module via the backplane, to an external device.

7. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 1 wherein the memory host module further configured with an external device interface, said method further comprising the step of transferring the operating program and data for the option module from the memory of the memory host module to an external device via the external device interface.

8. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 1 wherein the memory host module further configured with an external device interface, the at least one option module further configured with an external device interface, said method further comprising the step of transferring the first portion of the operating program and data for the option module from the memory of the memory host module to the memory of the option module via the external device interfaces.

9. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the memory host module further configured with an external device interface, the at least one option module further configured with an external device interface, said method further comprising the step of transferring the first portion of the operating program and data for the option module from the memory of the option module to the memory of the memory host module via the external device interfaces.

10. (currently amended) A memory host for a programmable logic controller (PLC) system, the system comprising at least one option module further comprising an option module memory, said memory host comprising a memory, a central processing unit (CPU), and a backplane interface, said memory host configured to:

store an operating program and data in said memory for the at least one option module; and

retrieve a first portion of the operating program and data from said memory;
wherein the first portion corresponds to said option module;

retain a remaining portion of the operating program and data; and

transmit the first portion of the operating program and data to the option
module.

11. (currently amended) A memory host in accordance with Claim 10 further configured to selectively transfer the first portion of the operating program and data stored in said memory to the option module memory via said backplane interface.

12. (currently amended) A memory host in accordance with Claim 10 further configured to automatically transfer the first portion of the operating program and data stored in said memory to the option module memory via said backplane interface.

13. (currently amended) A memory host in accordance with Claim 10 further configured with means to transfer the first portion of the operating program and data stored in said memory to the option module memory via said backplane interface.

14. (currently amended) A memory host in accordance with Claim 10 further configured to retrieve the first portion of the operating program and data from the option module memory via said backplane interface for storage in said memory.

15. (currently amended) A memory host in accordance with Claim 10 further configured with means to retrieve the first portion of the operating program and data from the option module memory via said backplane interface for storage in said memory.

16. (currently amended) A memory host in accordance with Claim 10 further comprising an external device interface adapted to be connected to an external device, and further configured to transfer the programsprogram and data from the external device to said memory via said external interface device.

17. (currently amended) A memory host in accordance with Claim 16 wherein said external device interface is a serial interface.

18. (currently amended) A memory host in accordance with Claim 16 further configured to transfer the first portion of the operating program and data from the external

device via the external interface device to the option module memory via said backplane interface.

19. (currently amended) A memory host in accordance with Claim 16 further configured to transfer the operating ~~programs~~^{program} and data from the external device via the external interface device to said memory.

20. (currently amended) A memory host in accordance with Claim 16 further configured to transfer the first portion of the operating program and data from the option module memory via said backplane interface to the external device via the external interface device.

21. (original) A memory host in accordance with Claim 16 further configured to transfer the operating program and data from said memory to the external device via the external interface device.

22. (currently amended) A memory host in accordance with Claim 16 further configured to ~~transfer the~~ transfer a second portion of the operating program and data from the memory via the external device interface to an option module that further comprises an external interface device.

23. (currently amended) A memory host in accordance with Claim 16 further configured to ~~transfer the~~ transfer a second portion of the operating program and data from an option module that further comprises an external interface device to said memory via the external interface device.

24. (original) A memory host in accordance with Claim 10 wherein said memory comprises flash memory.

25. (new) A method for storage and retrieval of programs and data within a programmable logic controller (PLC) system, the PLC system including a plurality of modules including a first module having a CPU and memory, a second module having a CPU and a memory, and a backplane interconnecting the first module and the second module, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving, by the first module, a first set of operating program and data and a second set of operating program and data, wherein the first set of operating program and data

corresponds to the first module and the second set of operating program and data corresponds to the second module;

retaining, by the first module, the first set of operating program and data; and

transmitting the second set of operating program and data to the second module.

26. (new) A method in accordance with Claim 25 wherein the PLC system includes a third module having a CPU and a memory, and the backplane interconnecting the first, second, and third modules, said method comprising:

receiving, by the first module, a third set of operating program and data; and

transmitting the third set of operating program and data from the first module to the third module.

27. (new) A method in accordance with Claim 25 wherein a removable memory is operationally coupled to the first module, the removable memory having the first and second sets of operating program and data, and said receiving the first and second sets of operating program and data comprises transferring the first and second sets of operating program and data from the removable memory to the memory of the first module.

28. (new) A method in accordance with Claim 25 wherein the first module includes a serial interface and said receiving the first and second sets of operating program and data comprises transferring the first and second sets of operating program and data via the serial interface to the first module.

29. (new) A method in accordance with Claim 25 wherein the first module includes a modem operationally coupled to a network and said receiving the first and second sets of operating program and data comprises obtaining, via the network and the modem, the first and second sets of operating program and data.

30. (new) A memory host for a programmable logic controller (PLC) system, said PLC system including a plurality of modules including a first module having a CPU and memory, a second module having a CPU and a memory, and a backplane interconnecting said first module and said second module, said first module configured to:

receive a first set of operating program and data and a second set of operating program and data, wherein the first set of operating program and data corresponds to said first module and the second set of operating program and data corresponds to said second module; retain the first set of operating program and data; and transmit the second set of operating program and data to said second module.

31. (new) A memory host in accordance with Claim 30 wherein said PLC system further includes a third module having a CPU and a memory, said backplane interconnecting said first, second, and third modules, said first module configured to:

receive a third set of operating program and data; and

transmit the third set of operating program and data to said third module.

32. (new) A memory host in accordance with Claim 30 wherein a removable memory is operationally coupled to said first module, said removable memory having the first and second sets of operating program and data therein, wherein to receive the first and second sets of operating program and data said first module configured to obtain the first and second sets of operating program and data from said removable memory.

33. (new) A memory host in accordance with Claim 30 wherein said first module includes a serial interface, to receive the first and second sets of operating program and data said first module configured to obtain the first and second sets of operating program and data via said serial interface.

34. (new) A memory host in accordance with Claim 30 wherein said first module includes a modem operationally coupled to a network, to receive the first and second sets of operating program and data, said first module configured to obtain, via said network and said modem, the first and second sets of operating program and data.